

NUMBER
5

DALGODA™

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Canada

BY JAN STRNAD

AND DENNIS FUJITAKE



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DALGODA

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INTRODUCTION BY JAN STRNAD

Hello, and welcome to *Dalgoda* #5!

We are fast approaching the end of the storylines begun in *Dalgoda* #1 and #2. "Dalgoda, Come Home!" is a two-part story concluding next issue that will return Dal to his home planet of Canada for a shocking discovery, and the fate of the elves will be revealed in the last chapter of "Grimwood's Daughter," also in *Dalgoda* #6.

The publishers of *Dalgoda* are also embarking on a great and perilous adventure. We are about to discover exactly how many comic book fans will pay two dollars for a deluxe comic about a dog from outer space.

What is there to say about price increases that hasn't been said a hundred times before? If you've been a comic book reader for more than a few months, you've heard all the lines. Price is a function of cost, and costs are always going up. The alternative press can't compete with Marvel and DC. Publishers don't nearly make as much per issue as most people think they do. Etc., etc.

Personally, I'm an optimist. I think the alternative press *can* compete with the big boys. I think that two dollars *is* too much to pay for a comic book, but that a way *can* be found to lower the price of books like *Dalgoda*.

It all depends on broadening the market for comic books. As long as our readers are drawn solely from the existing pool of comic book fans, circulation will be low and the cost per book will be high. Everything from cost per book to the possibility of selling advertising depends on increasing circulation of its titles.

Expanding the market for comics is a chicken-and-egg proposition. We can't expand the market until a selection of truly alternative titles is available for sale. And yet, without an existing market for alternative material, sales are too low to produce alternative books at a competitive price! For a period of time... *this* period of time, we're in right now... truly alternative material is going to cost "too much" and publishers like Fantagraphics Books and Kitchen Sink and all the others are going to make "too little."

We cannot depend on Marvel and DC, corporate entities that they are, to provide alternative material. Only the small press is likely to meet this need. Only the small press can afford to publish books that make as little profit as *Dalgoda*.

So here we are, producing a book for too little profit because we believe in the future of the comic book industry. And bless your heart, here *you* are, still buying *Dalgoda* for whatever reason you do so.

What can I say but... thank you for your warm and continued support!

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Dalgoda, Come Home

Part One

Dalgoda... please. Try not to take it so hard. I know this isn't what you wanted to hear. Things just haven't worked out the way we planned, that's all.

We haven't been able to mass manufacture the subspace drives. Of the dozens we've built, only *two* have worked right. And your own planet hasn't fared any better.

But that isn't enough, Rand! It isn't *nearly* enough! I need an *armada* of subspace ships!

I know. And... I sympathize completely. But there's nothing anyone can do.



We have your original drive and two copies. The copies have been installed in warships—the command ship and a support vehicle. Your original drive has been transferred to the Biosphere.

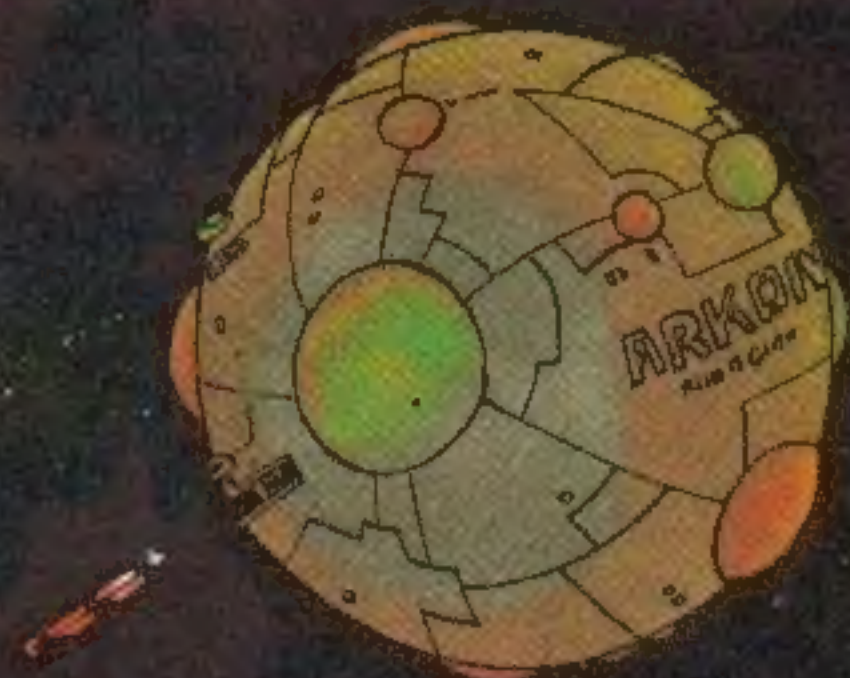


The *what*? Biosphere? What's a...?



'Scuse me. Kneedam... 8002?

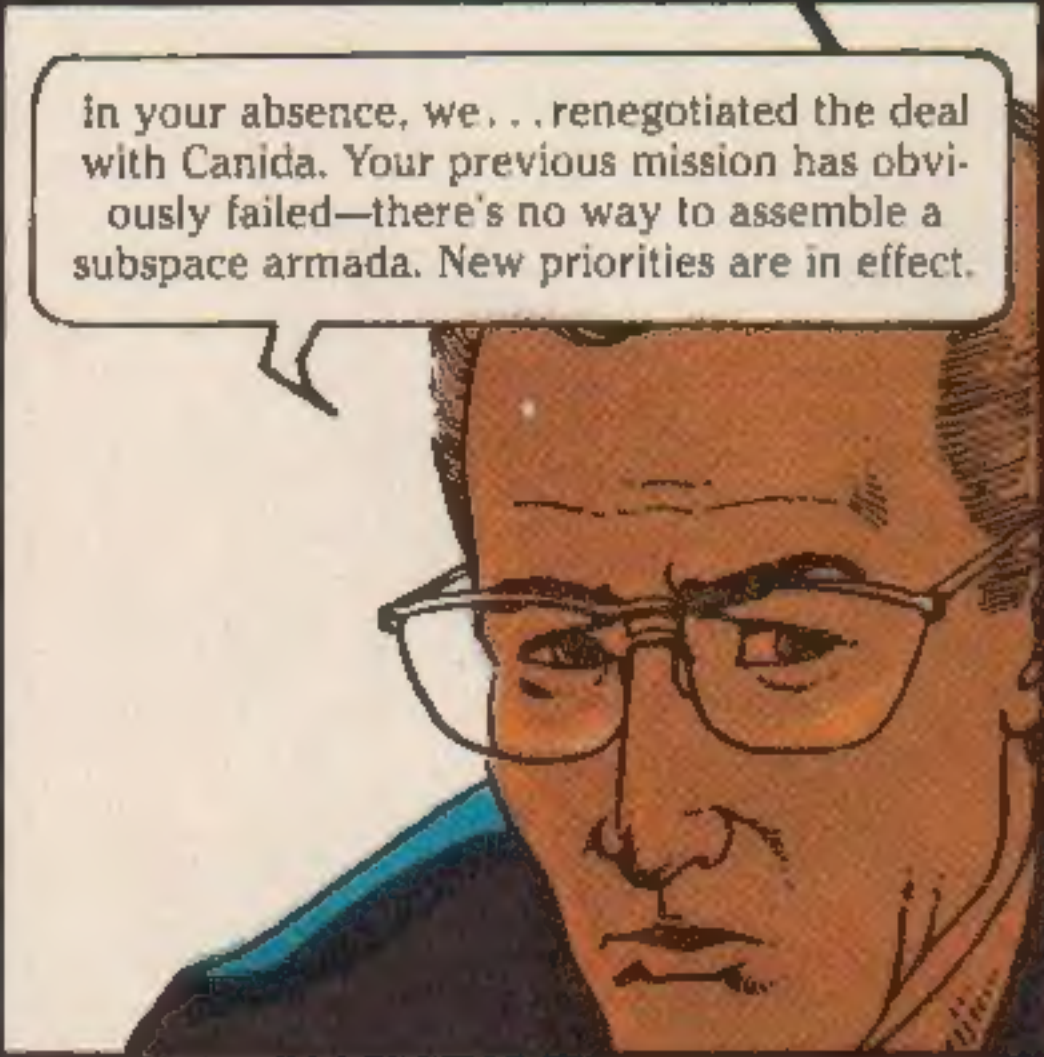
Right. Come in, but you'll have to work around us.



"Anyway, Dal... the Biosphere. It's like a miniature Earth containing a functioning ecology of plant and animal life. There's a hydroponics lab... food processing plant... several hundred human habitation units. We've been working on it for years."



That's very interesting, but what good is a Biosphere to me? Defending Canida against the Nimp requires warships—all the warships I can get! Why waste a subspace drive on a non-combat vessel?

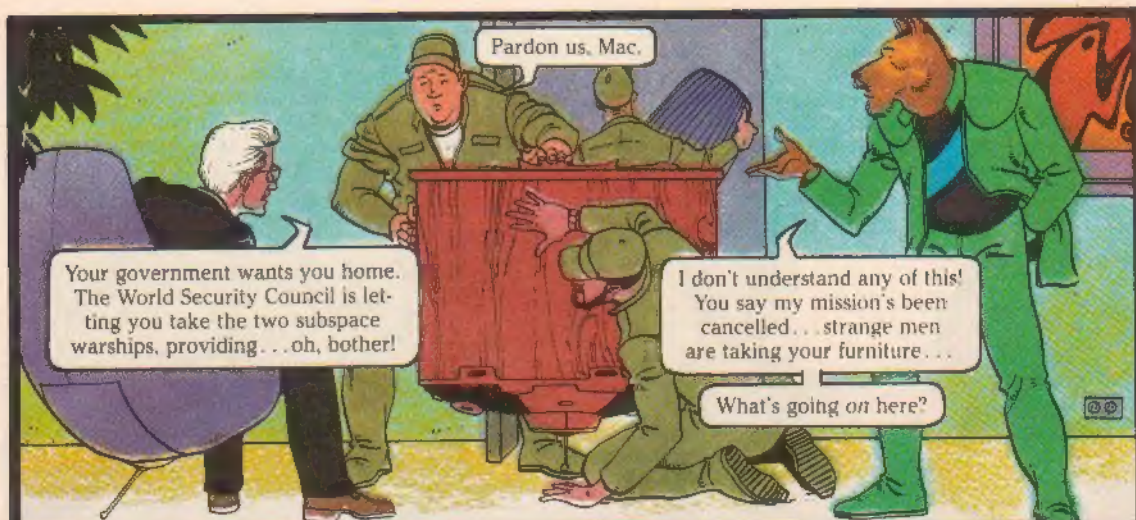


In your absence, we... renegotiated the deal with Canida. Your previous mission has obviously failed—there's no way to assemble a subspace armada. New priorities are in effect.



New priorities! But what about my people? What about saving Canida from the Nimp?

Take it easy! You've been gone for five months! Things change! I'm trying to bring you up to date!



Pardon us, Mac.

Your government wants you home. The World Security Council is letting you take the two subspace warships, providing... oh, bother!

I don't understand any of this! You say my mission's been cancelled... strange men are taking your furniture...

What's going on here?

©©

It's war, Dal... planetary war. Any day now. We couldn't keep the lid on any longer and now it's going to blow. They're moving World Security to bomb-resistant quarters and packing as much humanity as possible into the Biosphere for safekeeping.



Your new job will be escorting the Biosphere into deep space to return when... if... things calm down. But there's something more I have to tell you. It... isn't easy.

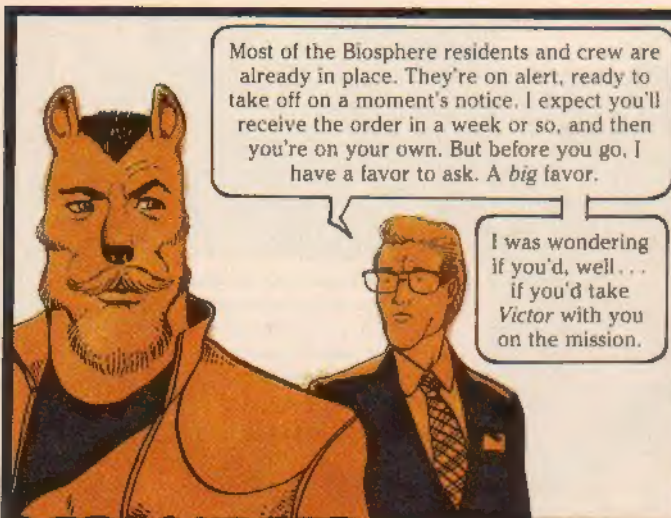


Dal, we haven't heard anything from your home planet in two weeks. They don't respond to our narrowcast. They *could* be maintaining communications silence for some military reason, but... well, it's also possible that they *can't* answer. We have to acknowledge the possibility that the Nimp have already seized Canada.

Oh, I see.

Yes... that... does give a different scent to things.





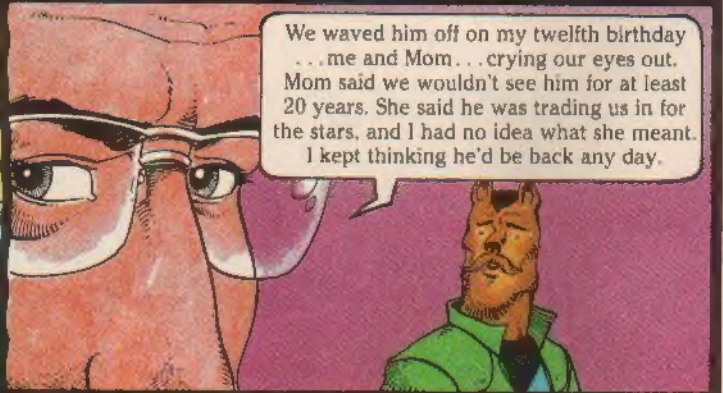
Most of the Biosphere residents and crew are already in place. They're on alert, ready to take off on a moment's notice. I expect you'll receive the order in a week or so, and then you're on your own. But before you go, I have a favor to ask. A *big* favor.

I was wondering if you'd, well... if you'd take Victor with you on the mission.

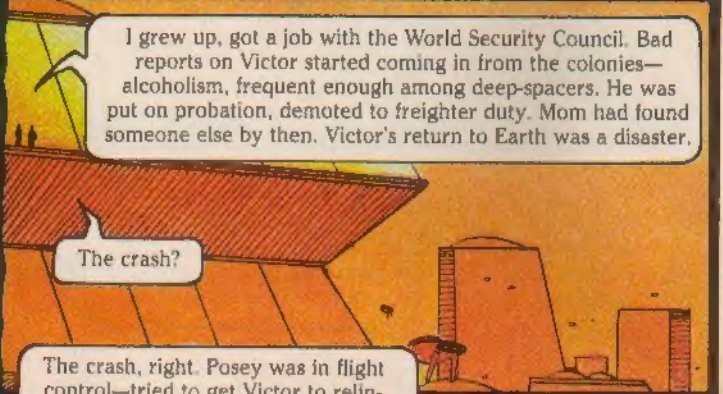


I know he's an alcoholic, that his record's bad. He's only trained as a pilot, and you wouldn't dare trust him with a job like that. But Dal—he'll *die* down here, war or no war, if you leave him behind.

"I wish you could see Victor as I see him, as I *remember* him! I was five when he got his first wings. For several years he worked the lunar and Mars runs, straight as an arrow. All kids idealize their fathers, I suppose. But I *idolized* mine. "Eventually he got tired of 'dipping his toes in the water,' as he put it. He wanted to fly *deep space*."



We waved him off on my twelfth birthday... me and Mom... crying our eyes out. Mom said we wouldn't see him for at least 20 years. She said he was trading us in for the stars, and I had no idea what she meant. I kept thinking he'd be back any day.

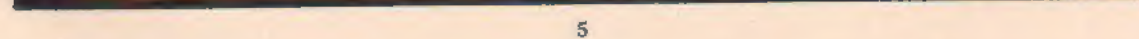
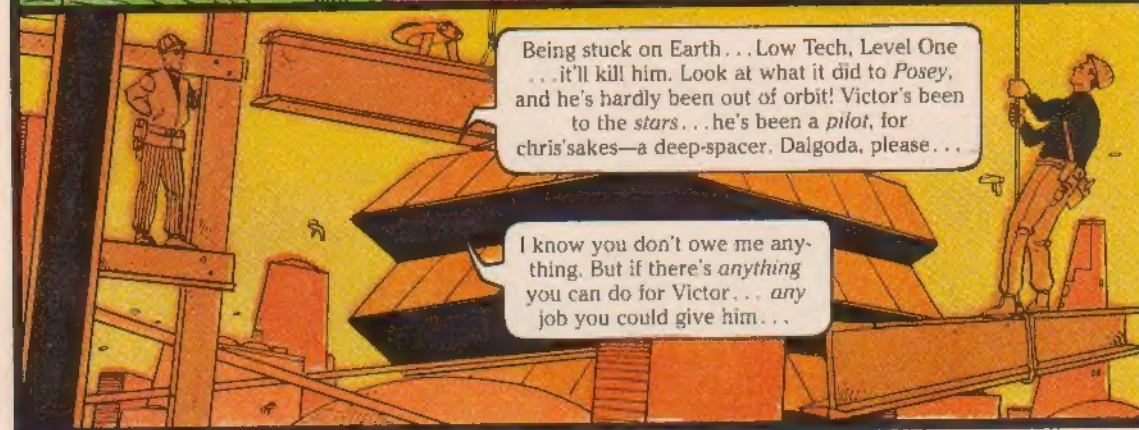
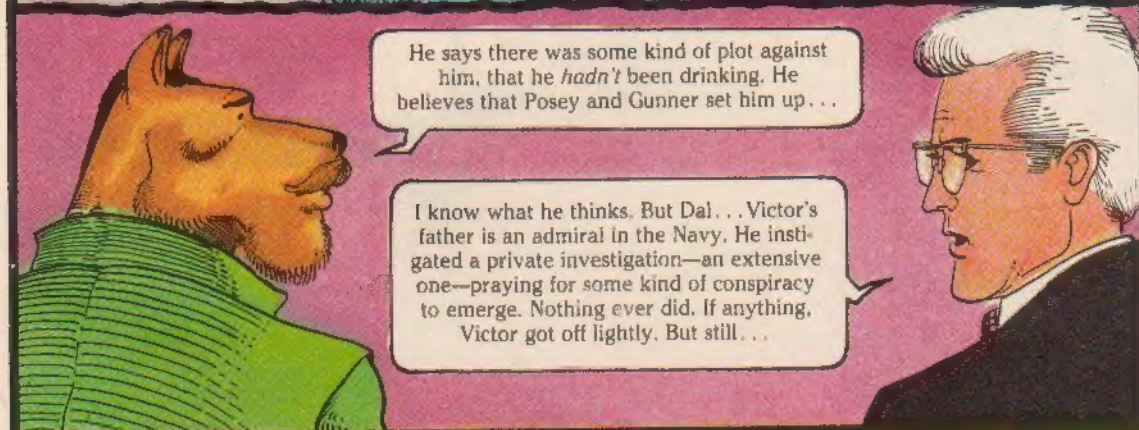
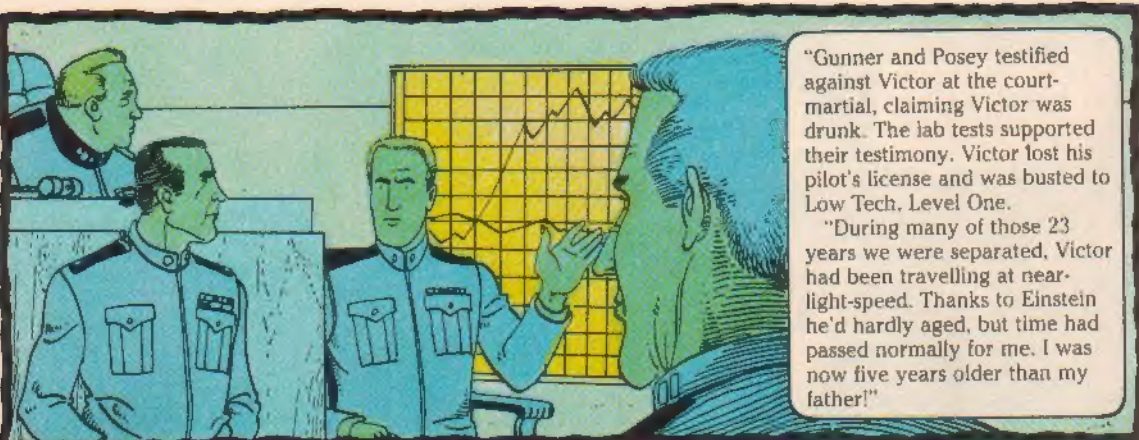


I grew up, got a job with the World Security Council. Bad reports on Victor started coming in from the colonies—alcoholism, frequent enough among deep-spacers. He was put on probation, demoted to freighter duty. Mom had found someone else by then. Victor's return to Earth was a disaster.

The crash?

The crash, right. Posey was in flight control—tried to get Victor to relinquish control of his ship but Victor refused. He docked in an occupied bay—crashed. Gunner pulled him out of the wreckage and had the medics take a blood sample... for the record.







He wouldn't like me
begging for him,
but... I don't know
what else to do.

Don't say anything more,
Rand. I'm sure I can find
a niche for Victor. I'll
keep him out of trouble.



You're a good friend,
Dalgoda—better than I
realized. I don't know
how to thank you...

You could buy
my lunch...



Honestly, Posey—you don't have to
come if you don't want to. But Schweiber's
the only other Canidan left on your planet
and I'd like to have him along.

He's qualified for a number of
positions and I think we can use him,
but I'd value your opinion. Still, he
did take your mate away from you
and if you'd rather avoid him...

It's okay, really. I worked through
all those negative feelings months
ago. Schweiber and my ex-wife are
closed chapters in a bad book.



Rand tells me she's done all right for herself with the World Security Council. If she wants to join her husband on the mission, I might not be able to say "no." Besides, if planetary war does break out on Earth, it'd be a shame to separate them.



Not to worry, pal.



I'm so glad to be back in space I'd share the mission with Lucrezia Borgia... who (come to think of it) shares many of my ex-wife's finer qualities.

The woman suckered me in and spit me out. But I've spit her out, too. My system's clean.



I guess you know best. I'm meeting them in the V.I.P. chambers at twenty-hundred to escort them to dinner. Shall we rendezvous in the dining hall?

Okay by me.



I'm glad you're taking this so well, Posey. You're one of the few humans I can trust. I don't even know much about *Schveiber* except that he came over as part of the Technical Exchange Program.

Rand confided some *doubts* to me about *Schveiber*. . . said something about him smelled "fishy." Did he mean that literally, do you think?

Posey? Did you hear me?





I said, do you think Rand meant it literally when he... Posey?



Posey?

Elsewhere...



No! Wait! What have I ever done to you?!

Plenty, mister. This doesn't begin to pay you back!



But you said... you told me... I thought...!

You thought wrong.

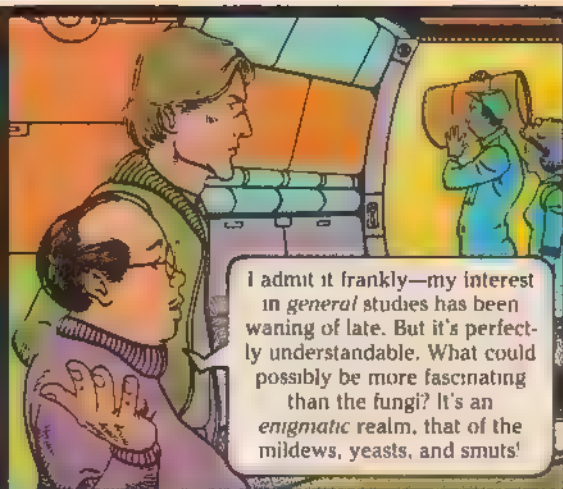


ZEEROOM

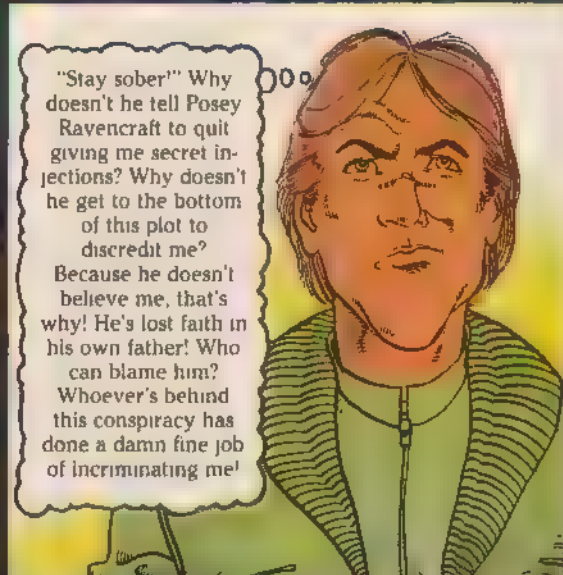


You must let me show you the Hydroponics Lab, Victor. The facilities for study of the Mycota are absolutely first rate!

"Stay sober!" he says! As if I was some kind of drunk! Randy still doesn't believe me!



I admit it frankly—my interest in *general* studies has been waning of late. But it's perfectly understandable. What could possibly be more fascinating than the fungi? It's an *enigmatic* realm, that of the mildews, yeasts, and smuts!



"Stay sober!" Why doesn't he tell Posey Ravencraft to quit giving me secret injections? Why doesn't he get to the bottom of this plot to discredit me? Because he doesn't believe me, that's why! He's lost faith in his own father! Who can blame him? Whoever's behind this conspiracy has done a damn fine job of incriminating me!



Why, certain fungi even flourish in the human intestines—the *Candida albicans*, for example. The effect can be *horrifying*, transforming the intestines into a veritable *distillery*!

Distillery!"



You said distillery! Just now . . . I heard you say it!

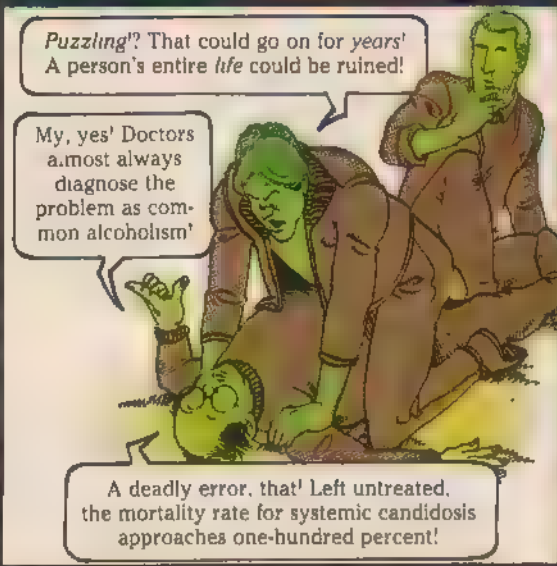
Well, yes I-I did indeed.



Victor Kneadam! I should've known!

But then—wouldn't that person get drunk I mean with a distillery in his guts? Without drinking any alcohol at all?

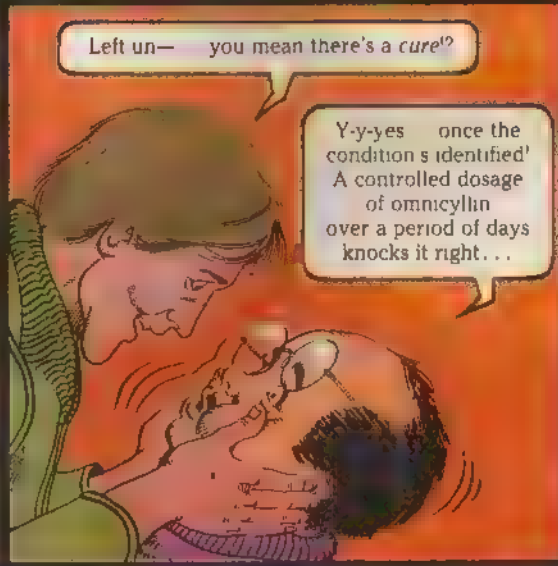
Oh, absolutely! Drunk as a skunk! It can be very puzzling to the ill-educated!



Puzzling? That could go on for years! A person's entire life could be ruined!

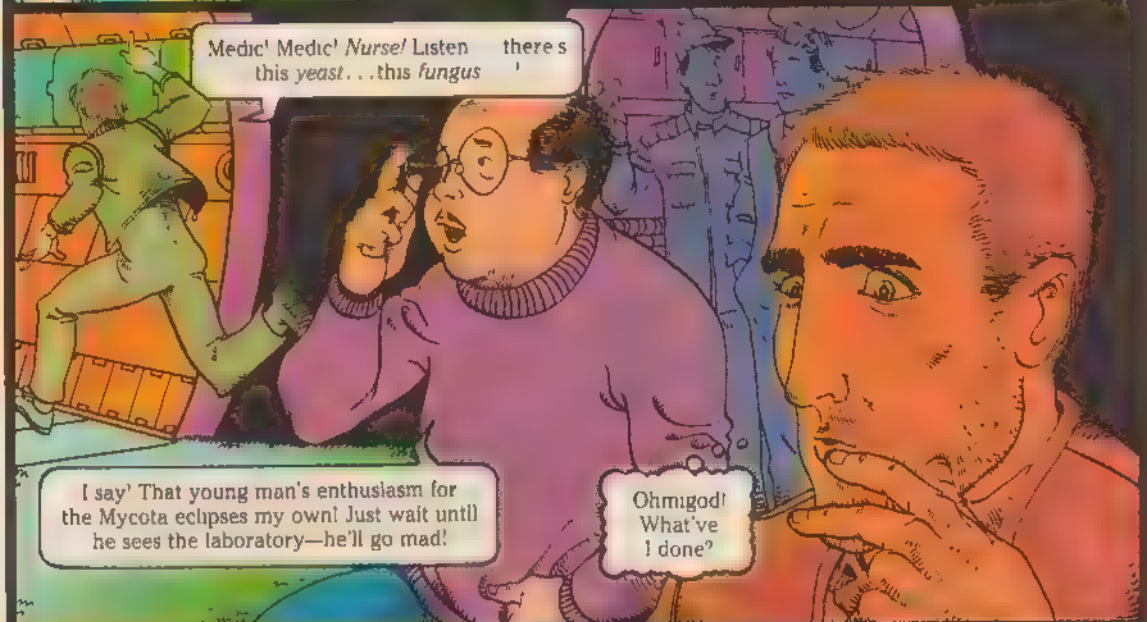
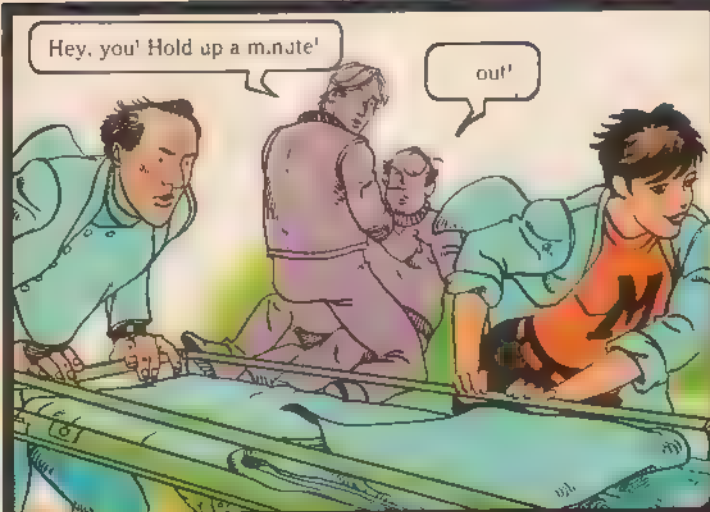
My, yes! Doctors almost always diagnose the problem as common alcoholism!

A deadly error, that! Left untreated, the mortality rate for systemic candidosis approaches one-hundred percent!



Left un— you mean there's a cure?

Y-y-yes—once the condition is identified! A controlled dosage of omnicillin over a period of days knocks it right . . .





Tell Security to find Posey Ravenscraft. Have him brought here. He... may be armed.

Yes, sir



Now... Mrs Schweiber... you say you were bathing. You heard voices in the living room. The sound of a blaster. A cry. When you entered the living room you saw...

My husband, Schweiber, lying in a heap, dead. I ran to the corridor and saw Posey Ravenscraft running away. He had a blaster in his hand



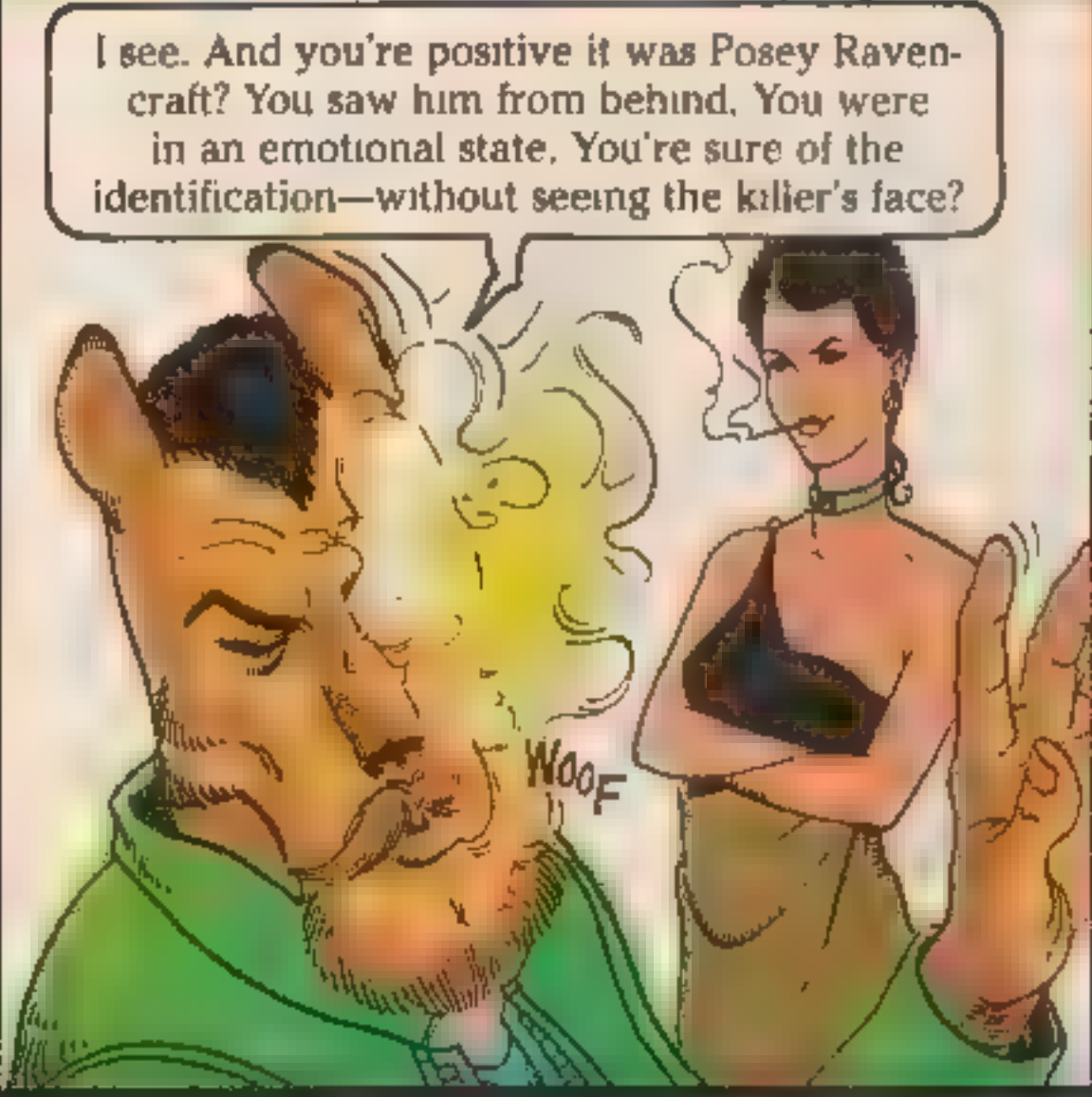
Pardon the observation, but you seem strangely *unmoved* by your husband's death. I was expecting... some display of remorse...

Oh, the bereaved widow's tears, perhaps...



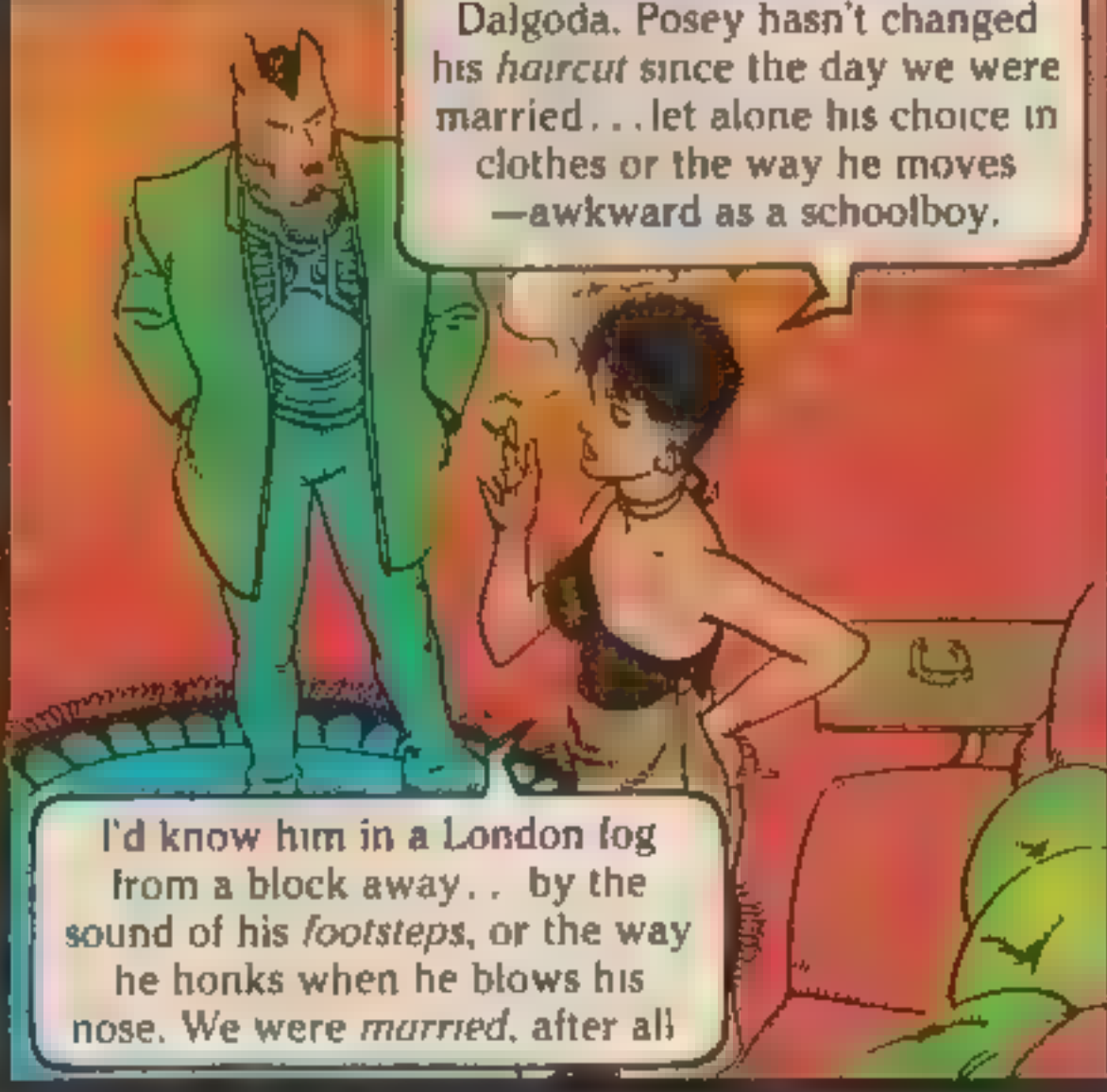
The truth is, Schweiber was scum. I hated him. If Posey hadn't beaten me to it, I might have shot him myself.

GASP KAFF



I see. And you're positive it was Posey Ravenscraft? You saw him from behind. You were in an emotional state. You're sure of the identification—without seeing the killer's face?

WOOF



Men are creatures of habit, Dalgoda. Posey hasn't changed his *haircut* since the day we were married... let alone his choice in clothes or the way he moves—awkward as a schoolboy.

I'd know him in a London fog from a block away... by the sound of his *footsteps*, or the way he honks when he blows his nose. We were *married*, after all

Um. Still, it's hard for me to imagine Posey as a cold-blooded murderer. I think I know him well—I trust him implicitly.

SNIF

Oh yes—the famous Canidan sniff test! The theory that an organism's emotions are expressed *pheromonally*, producing scents for the trained nose to identify and interpret

...and for very good reason. It's easy for words and appearances to deceive. It's much harder to subvert a *scent*. Scents cannot be falsified—only *covered up* when one is afraid of what they may reveal

And Posey, no doubt, exudes sincerity from every pore. I think he sports a *gland* for that purpose, Dalgoda. Have you *sonar-grammed* his internal organs? You might be surprised at what you find.

It doesn't pay to deride things you don't understand, Mrs. Schweiber. My people do place a great deal of faith in the smell of things...

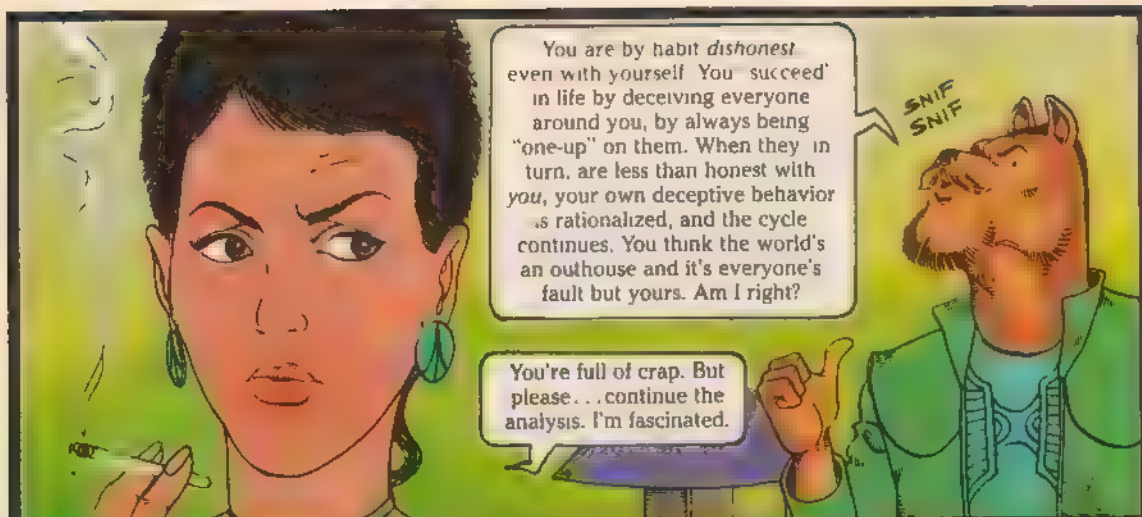
Spoken like a true hound

SHORT

Thank you

You humans can't even comprehend what a disadvantage you're under with your retarded olfactory sense. Your language hasn't even the *vocabulary* to express the spectrum of olfactory subtleties that we Canidans experience every day. For example

You absolutely *reek* of deceit. Not just a superficial deception, but something deep down... ingrained in your nature. Intrinsic



You are by habit *dishonest* even with yourself. You 'succeed' in life by deceiving everyone around you, by always being "one-up" on them. When they in turn, are less than honest with you, your own deceptive behavior is rationalized, and the cycle continues. You think the world's an outhouse and it's everyone's fault but yours. Am I right?

You're full of crap. But please... continue the analysis. I'm fascinated.



You shot your husband. You know that a laser blaster retains a slight odor after use and that I could probably follow the scent to the killer. You'd have left the gun in the corridor to substantiate your story but you didn't want to lose it—you need it, or you wanted to plant it on Posey or in his apartment later

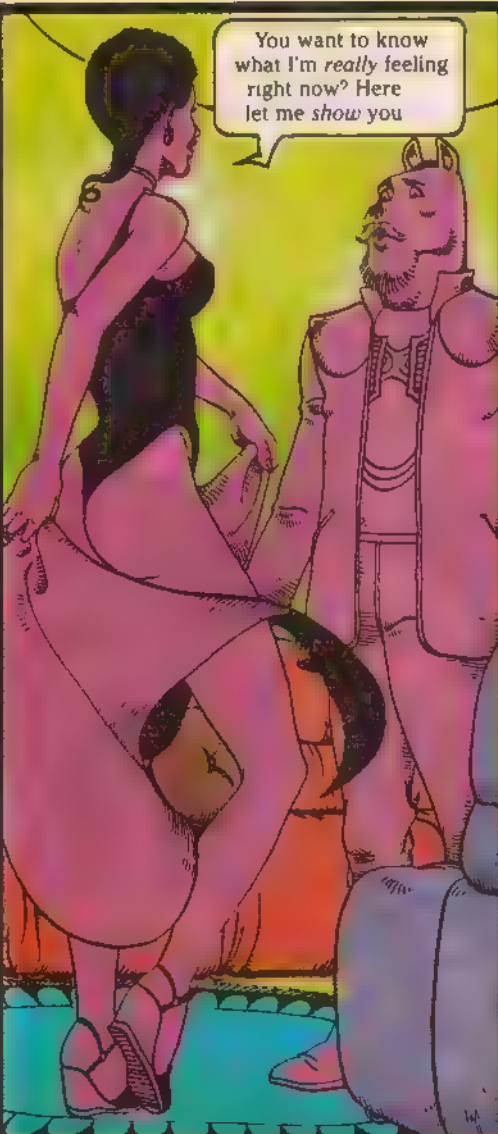


You'd hoped to put me off the scent by blowing smoke in my face. You succeeded in that, but your basic character betrays you.

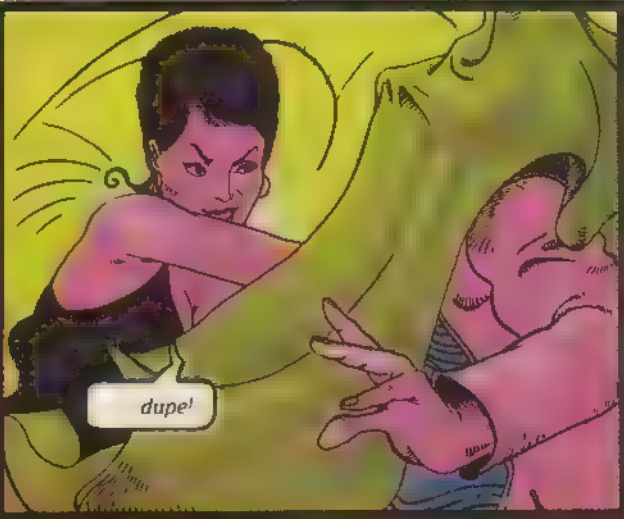
Why don't you just confess, Mrs. Schweiber? It'll be easier for all of us that way



How quickly you jump to all the wrong conclusions, Dalgoda! I do put on a facade, it's true—cool, tough... bitchy. It's my defense against a world that preys on the *soft-hearted*. But...



You want to know
what I'm *really* feeling
right now? Here
let me *show* you



dupe!

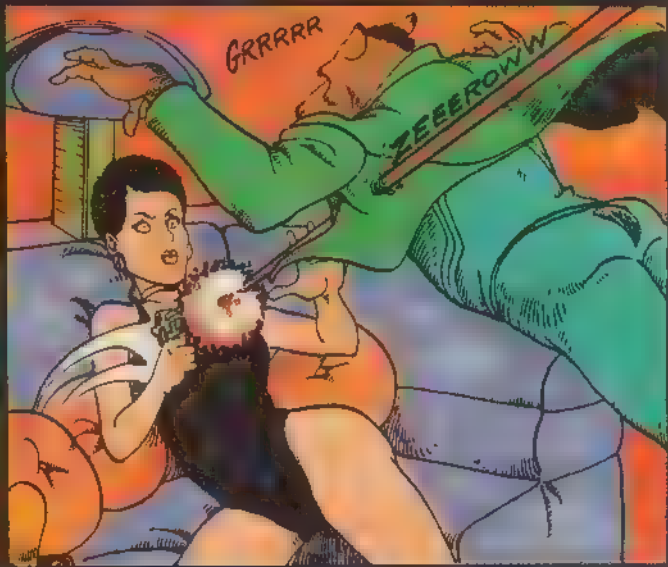


Hold it! You can't get away with this!

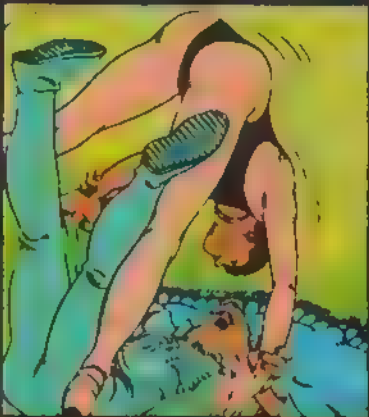
I don't have to 'get
away' with it

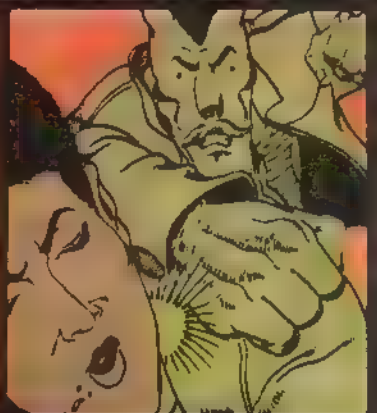
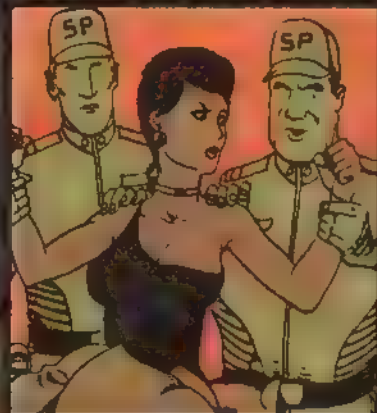


I only need
to do it

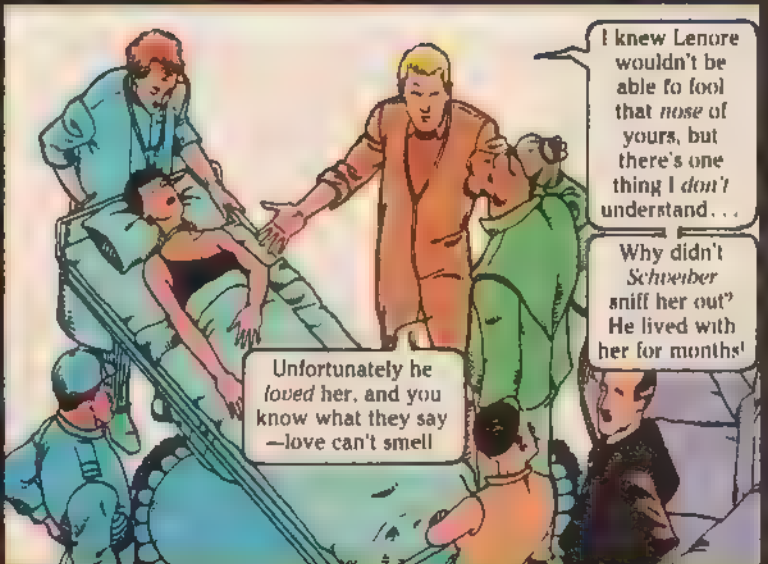


GRRRRR
ZEEEROWW





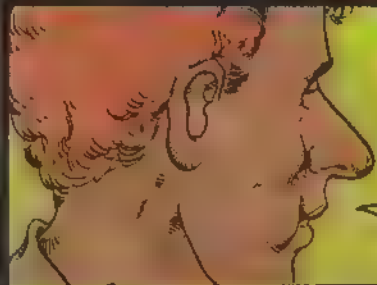
...so I was running all around trying to find Gunner to fix my shaver, when security picked me up!



I knew Lenore wouldn't be able to fool that nose of yours, but there's one thing I don't understand...

Why didn't Schweiber sniff her out? He lived with her for months!

Unfortunately he loved her, and you know what they say —love can't smell



All right, Daigoda. The drug will take effect any second. She'll start talking her head off —just prod her in the right direction now and again.



Thank you



Who do you work for, Mrs. Schweiber? Someone sent you to kill me. Who was it? What organization?



W-w-wuh... World. Security Council. EFE Division. Sent me. Kill Schweiber. Kill you. Earth For Earthlings.



EFE Division!

But I thought Earth for Earthlings
was an independent terrorist group!

Me too!

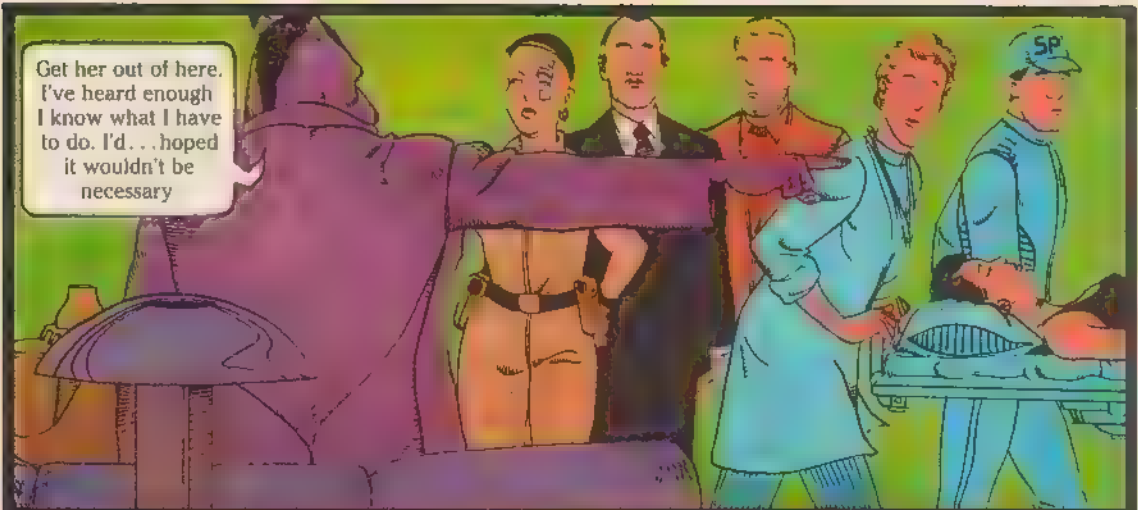
You, dupes. World Security,
owns EFE. Further own ends
No st-stigma Kill you. Can
use your brain... z-z-zomb-
droids Schweiber, perfect
cover Hots for Earth girls
No no no nose for. People.

What about *my* mission?
What about saving my
home planet... Canada?

No mission No Canada Fake as-, ass-, assina-
tions. Knew you wouldn't buy, Posey frame.
You'd think, my fault Strictly pers-, pers-, pers-
onal Kill Schweiber, Kill you. Strictly pers-

World Sec-. Sec-. Project, Interce-. Cept.
Kill Schweiber, Kill you. Canada, no
Canada. Strictly pers—. No connec-. No
connec-. Take ships Kill you. Take ships

I take you. Take, ships World Sec- World
Sec- Force hand, Ready to take, Take
you. Take ships Take Take you, Take
You Take You Take Take

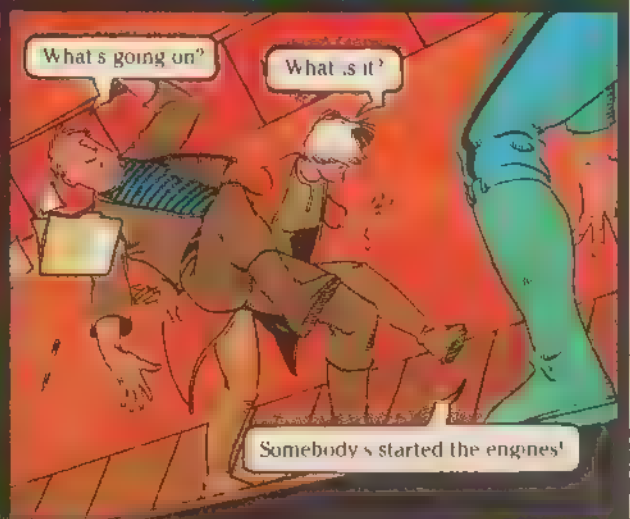


Get her out of here.
I've heard enough
I know what I have
to do. I'd... hoped
it wouldn't be
necessary



Dal? Are you all right?

Excuse me, Gunner I
don't have much time



What's going on?

What is it?

Somebody's started the engines!





Are you sure about this? We aren't scheduled to leave for another week! We don't have clearance from Earth!

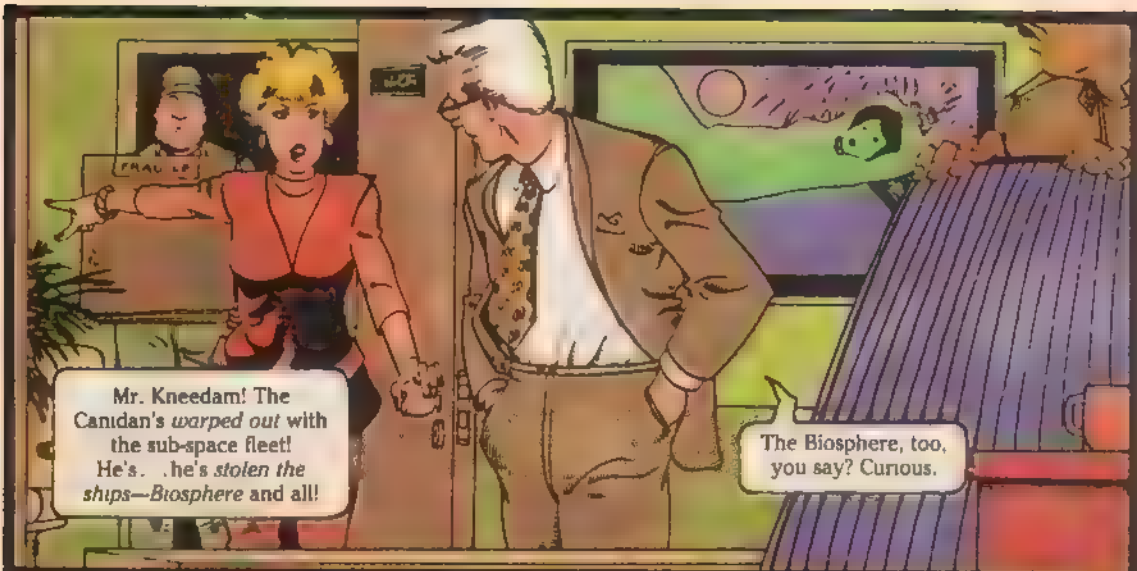
Hey the dog-man's in charge He says to blast off...so we blast off



Ah, sub-space navigational computer logged on Coordinates entered and verified Ready when you are

Roger!





To Director, Project
Intercept Re: Hijacking of
sub-space fleet by Dalgoda



Nick—Obviously, Canidan received
insider's tip that something dirty was
afoot. Had this office been privy to
exact nature of plans, might have
averted disaster. Suggest you *tighten*
security and, in future, keep this divi-
sion *fully informed*, etc. etc. etc. .

ARKON
BIOSPHERE

Where are we going, Dal?

Where else? *Canida!*

NEXT ISSUE
THE CONCLUSION OF
DALGODA,
COME HOME!

LETTERS

Send to: DALGODA, Letters Department, 707 Camino Manzanitas, Thousand Oaks CA 91360

Gary,

First off, let me congratulate you on *Dalgoda* and "Grimwood's Daughter." I've been collecting comics for over 15 years and lately I've been turning to alternate comics for fresh approaches to storytelling. You really end up being unfocused by mainstream Marvel and DC work (some titles are still good but most are a bit condescending). The scripts pander to sub-zero intellect (Alan Moore is a notable exception) and the artwork seems to be generated by assembly-line automatons (although I quite sympathize with the interminable deadlines that confront both writer and artist). That's why *Dalgoda* is such a pleasant change.

Again, congratulations to all involved in *Dalgoda* and "Grimwood's Daughter." You're giving some of us out here exactly what we want. Exactly what you wanted to hear—right?

Bruce Peck
Toronto, Ont., Canada

Dear dog-overs,

What makes *Dalgoda* such a pleasure to read is the various characters' "down-to-earth" feel. Posey

Ravencraft and Victor Kneadam are good examples. There are no clear-cut heroes or villains. Each has a sympathetic and a dark side to his character. But the rightful star of the book is *Dalgoda*. In just four issues, Jan Strnad has managed to make this character immensely likeable. Dal is klutzy enough to make any reader protective, yet shrewd enough to remind us every now and then that this is not just your cute doggy from next door. Dal's concern over the worry he may have caused Posey by his five months' disappearance is heart-warming and a welcome change from some other heroes' attitude. Dennis Fujitake's realistic rendering emphasizes this feeling of ordinariness about the characters and makes the out-of-the-ordinary things that happen to them even more so. Finally, Kenneth Smith's colors are discreetly efficient and help give a unique look to the book, as does the machine-etching which suits Fujitake's "mini-mal" network.

Jean-Paul Jennequin
Paris, France

Dear Folks,

Dalgoda has a unique look on the

stands today. Where everyone else is using full, bold colors, here we have sensitive color washes (great stuff, Kenneth!) that perfectly complement the pen work of Dennis Fujitake. A friend of mine was put off by Dennis's work, because of the cartoonish feel to it, but for me that's its main strength. The use of hand gestures, body language, and exaggerated facial expressions flesh out the characters beautifully.

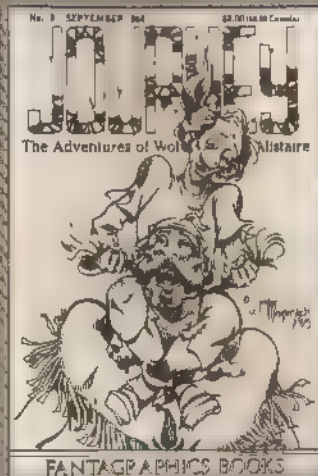
The writing ain't too shabby, either. *Dalgoda* is a wonderful mixture of drama, intrigue, and humor. Dal is a very likeable chap. I enjoyed the way he screamed and ran for help when attacked by the Kill-drone last issue. A natural response y'know.

Another thing I liked was the introduction of Gunner Hathaway in *Dal* #2. It's good to see a female lead who isn't a Miss Universe look-alike. Just one more thing that makes this book a bit different.

Dalgoda #3 was even better than #2 and that's saying something. This issue was better paced, funnier, and altogether more intriguing. Most writers rely on verbal interplay for humor in comics, but Jan seems to get the laughs out of playing up the more ludicrous situations and

See LETTERS, inside back cover

ALSO ON SALE RIGHT NOW FROM FANTAGRAPHICS BOOKS...



JOURNEY #19: Wolverine MacAllister's motley crew of fellow travelers encounters The Solitary! Story & art by WILLIAM LOEB.



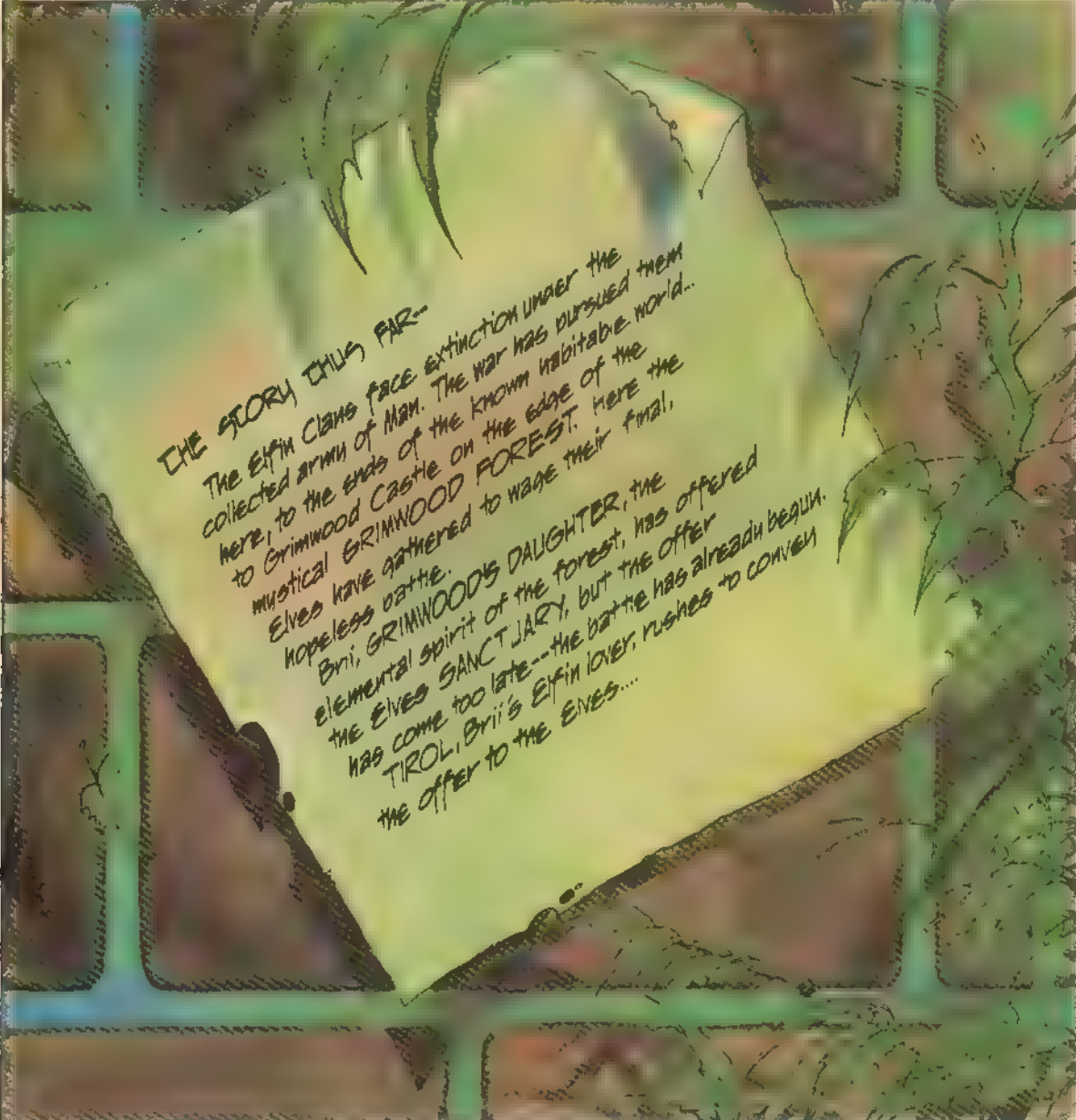
HUGO #3: Hugo ends up at the bottom of sea, abducted by King Neptune's voluptuous daughters! Story & art by MILTON KNIGHT, Jr.



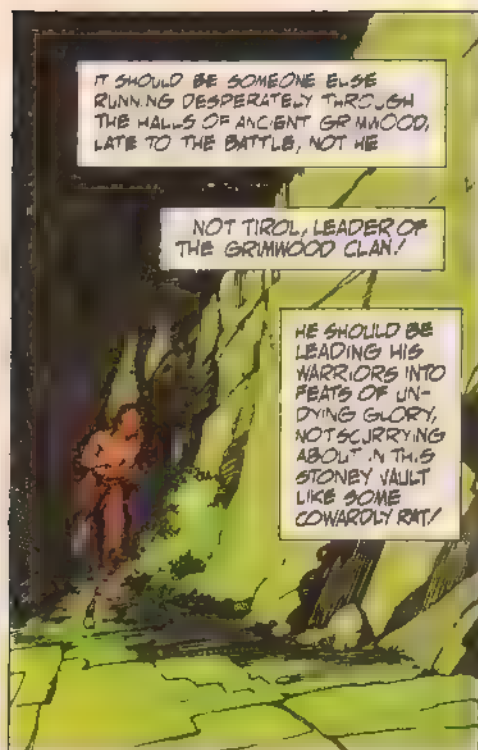
NEAT STUFF #1: From the pages of *Weirdo* comes the thoroughly modern lunacy of Peter Bagge, with Girly Girl, Chuckle Boy, the Goon in Moon, and many more oddball characters! Magazine size—story & art by PETER BAGGE.

GRIMWOOD'S DAUGHTER

C H A P T E R F O U R



THE STORY, THUS FAR—
The Elfin Clans face extinction under the
collected army of Man. The war has pursued them
here, to the ends of the known habitable world...
to Grimwood Castle on the edge of the
mystical GRIMWOOD FOREST. Here the
Elves have gathered to wage their final,
hopeless battle.
Bri, GRIMWOOD'S DAUGHTER, the
elemental spirit of the forest, has offered
the ELVES SANCTUARY, but the offer
has come too late--the battle has already begun.
TIROL, Bri's Elfin lover, rushes to convey
the offer to the ELVES....



IT SHOULD BE SOMEONE ELSE RUNNING DESPERATELY THROUGH THE WALLS OF ANCIENT GRIMWOOD, LATE TO THE BATTLE, NOT HE

NOT TIROL, LEADER OF THE GRIMWOOD CLAN!

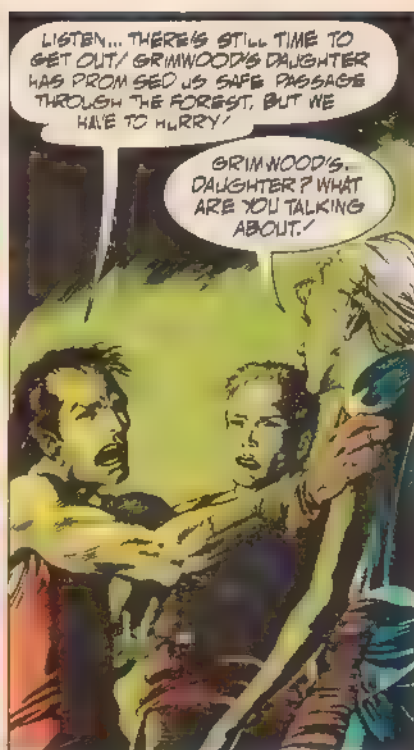
HE SHOULD BE LEADING HIS WARRIORS INTO FEATS OF UN-DYING GLORY, NOT SCURRYING ABOUT IN THIS STONEY VAULT LIKE SOME COWARDLY RAT!



SHARDA! DOSKEN!

TIROL! EVERYONE'S BEEN WONDERING

PRAYSE THE GODS I'M NOT TOO LATE!



LISTEN... THERE'S STILL TIME TO GET OUT! GRIMWOOD'S DAUGHTER HAS PROMISED US SAFE PASSAGE THROUGH THE FOREST, BUT WE HAVE TO HURRY!

GRIMWOOD'S DAUGHTER? WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT!



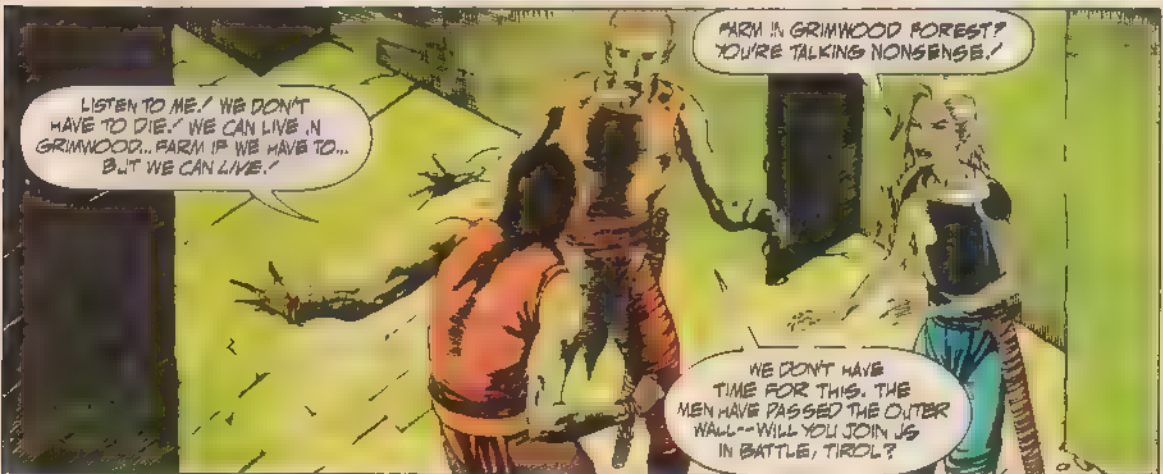
THE DAUGHTER-- AN ELEMENTAL SHE'S MADE AN OFFER TO LET US LIVE IN THE FOREST TO ESCAPE THE MEN.

WE CAN ALL ESCAPE INTO GRIMWOOD!



YOU'RE OVERWROUGHT, TIROL. YOU'RE NOT MAKING ANY SENSE. WHERE'S YOUR SWORD?

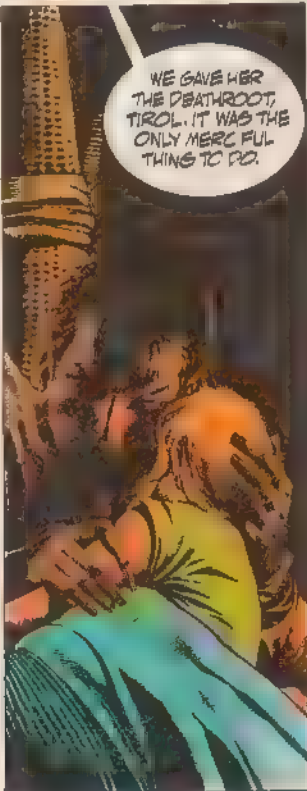
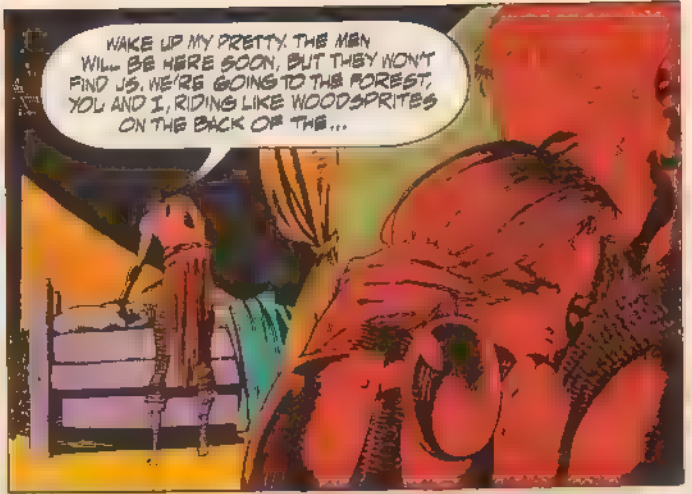
ARE YOU ABLE TO FIGHT?

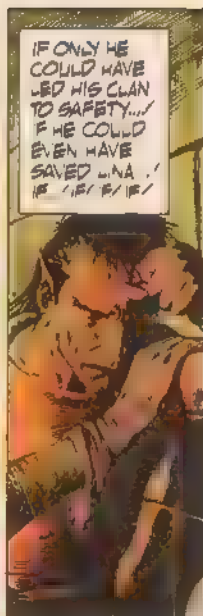


LISTEN TO ME! WE DON'T HAVE TO DIE! WE CAN LIVE IN GRIMWOOD... FARM IF WE HAVE TO... BUT WE CAN LIVE!

FARM IN GRIMWOOD FOREST? YOU'RE TALKING NONSENSE!

WE DON'T HAVE TIME FOR THIS. THE MEN HAVE PASSED THE OUTER WALL-- WILL YOU JOIN US IN BATTLE, TIROL?





"SUCH IS THE FATE OF THOSE WHO FLEE." TIROL THINKS, AND THE DECISION IS MADE





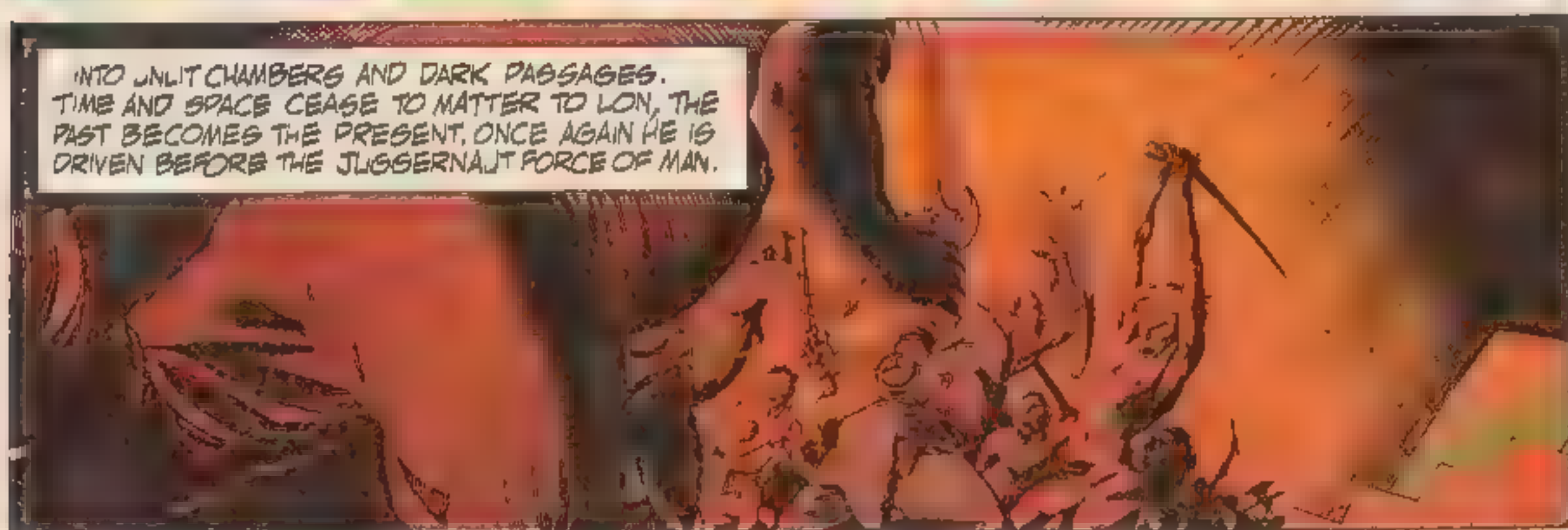
THE OUTER WALL IS IN RUINS, THE INNER WALL BREACHED. THE
ARMY OF MAN FLOWS TOWARD SERRANO'S CASTLE WITH THE RUSH
OF FIRE, THICK AS BLOOD, INPLACABLE AS THE TIDE



THE CASTLE ITSELF IS VIOLATED AND MEN SPREAD THROUGH ITS ROOMS AND HALLS LIKE A VIRULENT DISEASE



THE ELVES
ARE PUSHED
BACK BACK..



INTO UNLIT CHAMBERS AND DARK PASSAGES.
TIME AND SPACE CEASE TO MATTER TO LON, THE
PAST BECOMES THE PRESENT. ONCE AGAIN HE IS
DRIVEN BEFORE THE JUGGERNAUT FORCE OF MAN.



IN THE MIDST OF
THE BATTLE HE
CRASHES AGAINST
HIS WEARINESS
AS IF AGAINST A
WALL. HE FALTERS
AND THEN FEELS
HIMSELF RENEWED.



A PORTION OF HIS MIND SEPARATES
ITSELF AND SEEMS TO VIEW THE ACTION
FROM A DISTANCE. HE SEES HIMSELF
SLASHING FRUITLESSLY AGAINST A
WAVE OF MEN. "THIS IS NO ENEMY,"
HE THINKS FROM AFAR, "BUT A FORCE OF
NATURE, UNSTOPPABLE AS THE WIND."

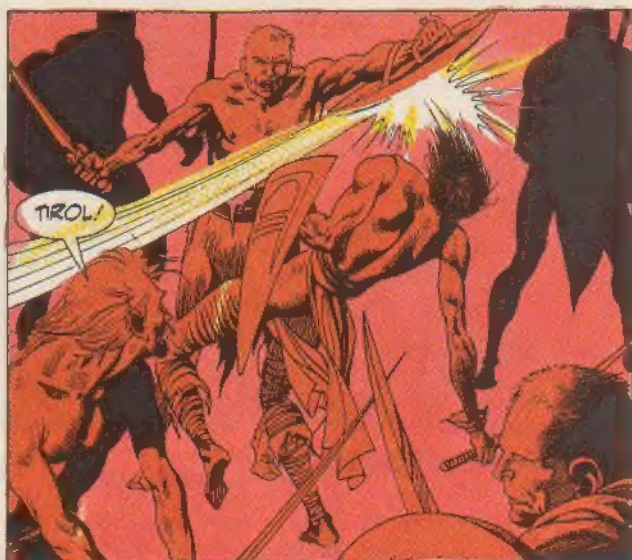


LOU'S GROUP IS JOINED BY ANOTHER, BUT THESE ELVES, TOO, ARE RETREATING BEFORE THE HUMAN ONSLAUGHT.



SUDDENLY A FAMILIAR VOICE SNAPS HIM TO ATTENTION.

THEY'LL MAKE A FATAL MISTAKE SOON, COUSIN. LISTEN FOR IT.



WAS A VINE SLASHED? A FLOWER CRUSHED UNDER A HUMAN BOOT? NO MATTER. THE SCREAM OF THE FOREST SHATTERS THE CROWD, AND FOR ONE MOMENT THE BATTLE IS FORGOTTEN.



A MAN IS IMPALED BY HIS OWN SWORD...



...AND FROM THIN AIR, AN APPARITION APPEARS!

LLL-LOOK!

MORE THAN THE ELFIN SWORD, MORE THAN THE WRATH OF THEIR SAVAGE LEADER, THE MEN FEAR THE GHOSTLY WHITE STAG THAT HAS MATERIALIZED IN THEIR MIDST! LIKE DROPLETS OF WATER THEY SCATTER UNDER ITS FLASHING HOOVES!



THE ELVES, TOO, ARE FEARFUL... ALL BUT ONE, WHO HAS DIVINED THE STAG'S MISSION.



NO SIMPLE HEROISM FOR YOU TODAY, COUSIN TIROL. YOURS IS A MORE DEMANDING DESTINY.



LIVE, DAMN YOU!



TO BE CONTINUED

From LETTERS
page 23

ROUGH
SKETCH
OF DAL'S
OUTFIT
FOR #5.

Dennis



then contrasting them with the serious ones. Check out the opening scene to see what I mean. On page 2 Posey, Rand, and Trione are discussing both their moral and practical viewpoints on the anthrosynthetics, but by page 3 they're busy fighting off an exploding Coca-Cola bottle. Then there's Dal's and Victor's chase through the space-station (inspired by Scooby Doo?) Finally, everyone is sitting around solemnly imagining hideous fates for Dal, so naturally he's the guest of honor on a tropical island paradise. I was half-expecting that last page, but it still had me laughing out loud.

This was Dennis's best work to date, too. I particularly liked the ocean sequence and the lab scene on page 5. Dennis puts a lot of detail into his drawings, but not many black areas to highlight objects. Most artists who try to end up with cluttered artwork, but Dennis pulls it off. Fine stuff indeed.

P.S. Is Dal modeled after Tom Selleck? That's the theory running around the local comics shop...

Warwick J. Gray
Dunedin, New Zealand

Gentlemen,

"Christmas Present" [Dal #4] was the best horror story I've read in months. *Dalgoda's* deliberate pacing hasn't been used to better effect than in the gradual buildup of uneasiness that pays off—beautifully—in page 18's panel of vast, blue emptiness. It was a moment of

masterfully understated horror, one of those moments that made M.R. James such a pleasure to read.

While *Dalgoda* is one of the freshest executions of an adventure-story concept to be marketed in years, I'm still unenthusiastic about "Grimwood's Daughter." Although this is high fantasy honed to a cutting edge of despair, and to me more palatable than many examples of the genre I've been exposed to, I'm still not interested in the fate of the characters. Within these eight-page installments, Tirol the valiant, sensitive leader, Lon the hot-headed man of action, and Bril the cool, mysterious enchantress remain character sketches rather than characters; pawns all too clearly being manipulated to fulfill the requirements of the writer's plot. On the count of likeable characters, absorbing stories, and clarity of expression, however, *Dalgoda* strongly reminds me of *Tin-Tin*!

C.E. Dinkins
FPO San Francisco, CA

Hi,

I just wanted to let you know that I'm enjoying the hell out of *Dalgoda*. It's not Dennis's slick artwork or Ken Smith's vibrant colors that turn me on to Dal, though. It's the sense of humor that Jan injects into his scripts. I don't know if the humor is intended or if it's just my own warped interpretation of what's funny, but I honestly find this book funny at times. My favorite so far was in issue #2 on page 4, on the last panel, where Dal wakes Posey and tells him that he was talking about the "Sun on the Beach" in his sleep again.

"Grimwood's Daughter" is very good, also. Kevin Nowlan is at his best right now. But what chances do the Elves honestly think they have against the superior armies of man? All the degradation heaped on mankind by the elves in days gone by will only supply man with a burning hatred that will not be quenched until the life has been chased out of the last elf on Earth.

One gripe about this book: the use of black as your background color on the covers. I like to keep my comics free of smudges, finger prints, etc. If I can, but black holds the finger prints of everyone who touches the book, from the comics shop owner on down.

Stan Johnston
Yazoo City, MS

NEXT ISSUE:



Dalgoda makes a speech...
The first brush with the Nimp...
A dismaying revelation on Canida... And a new beginning for the whole crew... in "*Dalgoda, Come Home, Part Two*!"
Story by JAN STRNAD
Art by DENNIS FUJITAKE
Colors by KEN SMITH

PLUS: The concluding chapter of "*Grimwood's Daughter*"
Story by JAN STRNAD
Art by KEVIN NOWLAN
Colors by KEN SMITH
On sale in MAY

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Original artwork is available through Fantagraphics Books. Each page is individually priced. If you're interested in purchasing any art, please send a list of pages you're interested in and a self-addressed, stamped envelope, and we'll send you prices. Pages are sold on a first-come, first-served basis, so please don't dilly.

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